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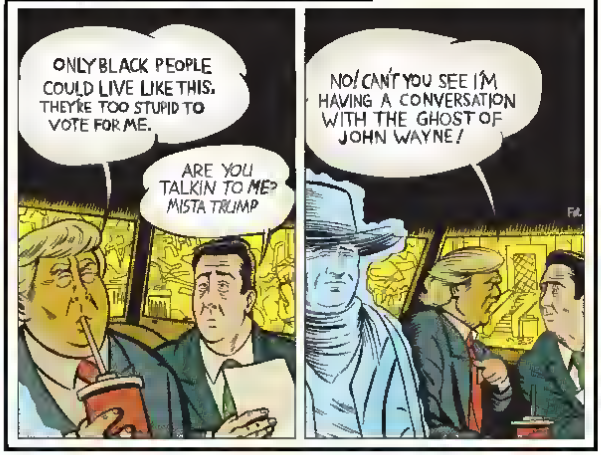
Photo and design by Michael Ziobrowski

ORANGE FEATHERS »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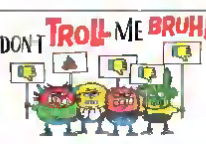
OC Weekly is located at 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, (714) 966-5900. Display Advertising, (714) 966-5900; Classified Advertising, (714) 966-5900; National Advertising, (800) 276-8884, voicemedia@group.com; Fax, (714) 966-5999; Advertising Fax, (714) 966-5999; Classified Fax, (714) 966-5999; Circulation, (800) 730-7300; Website: www.ocweekly.com. The publication is free, one per reader. Removal of more than one paper from any distribution point constitutes theft, and violators are subject to prosecution. Please address all correspondence to OC Weekly 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708; email: letters@ocweekly.com. Published weekly (Thursday). OC Weekly is wholly owned and operated by OC Weekly News, Inc., a California corporation. Subscription price: $95 for six months, $90 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to OC Weekly at P.O. Box 70550, Santa Ana, CA 92799. Submissions of all kinds are welcome. Address them to the editor and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Copyright ©2019, OC Weekly News, Inc. All rights reserved. OC Weekly® is a registered trademark of OC Weekly News, Inc. Kelley Paperi™ is a trademark of OC Weekly News, Inc.



"I'm sure you think it's a hilarious pun, but 'The teens did "Nazi" the controversy coming' is at best tone-deaf, thoughtless and terrible journalism. At worst, it normalizes jokes related to the death of 6 million human beings and passively accepts anti-semitic behavior. Stay classy, *OC Weekly*."
—*Stephanie Morgan Joyce, commenting on Gabriel San Román's "OC High Schoolers Sieg Heil Over Swastika Beer Pong"*

We respond: You obviously don't read our paper or have any idea of our track record reporting on extremism. Check out San Román's follow-up on page 6 for more context—and keep reading!

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Swig Heil

OC high-school students become national embarrassment following viral photos of swastika drinking game

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL ZIGAROWSKI

The shocking, repulsive images are now known the world over. Red plastic cups arranged in the shape of a swastika became the focal point of a Costa Mesa party attended over the weekend of March 2 by local high-school students. They raised their beers for Snapchat over the hateful symbol of Adolph Hitler's genocidal regime for a "rage cage" drinking game. Then party-goers gathered around the swastika for a group snapshot, with many throwing Sieg Heil salutes in their best Hitler Youth impression.

And then came the screenshots that brought the swastika "rage cage" to widespread outrage.

By Sunday morning of that weekend, photos from the house party had circulated all over social media. Students from Newport Harbor, Corona del Mar, Estancia and Costa Mesa high schools were among the accused partiers. All campuses belong to the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, and when reached for comment by the *Weekly*, district officials did offer a response to the offensive images.

"We were recently made aware of social media postings involving some students who created inappropriate anti-Semitic symbols and possible underage drinking," said Adriana Angulo, a district spokeswoman. "While these actions did not occur on any school campus or school function, we condemn all acts of anti-Semitism and hate in all their forms."

The district sent the same message to parents on Sunday, noting that it was working with local law-enforcement agencies to address the issue. "We have taken an informational report on the incident," says Roxi Fyad, spokeswoman for Costa Mesa Police Department. "As of now, we cannot confirm that a crime has been committed, but we are still looking into it." The probe involves both the swastika stunt and furnishing alcohol to minors.

Some of the party-goers responded online to the intense social-media backlash in now-deleted tweets. "I'm deleting social media because I can't take the criticism for posting one photo," one girl tweeted. "I did not intend to make anyone upset. It got blown out of proportion."

Another teen offered an apology of sorts over Twitter. "We thought of this as a joke because in out [sic] heads we don't think of it as a big deal, but when it gets blown up like this, it makes us think, and we realize it was terrible and we apologize. To us, it's like the 'n' word where it doesn't mean slavery, it's a way to address people, and now the holocaust is the new 'n' word, and it's sad but it's the truth."

"Like everyone else, I felt shocked," says Rabbi Peter Levi, OC regional director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), of the photos. "How could these kids in our own back yard be thinking that a Nazi salute or swastikas are a game or a joke? The other part of me said I shouldn't be surprised at all because we've seen this over and over again, the normalization of hate." The ADL is in contact with the district and the relevant school principals in offering resources for a comprehensive response.

By Monday, the controversy made national and international headlines in *USA Today*, *Newsweek*, *The Guardian*, *Haaretz* and *The Jerusalem Post*. Orange County may be in the scornful eye of the world again, but anti-Semitism is nothing new here, and the *Weekly* has documented some of the worst of the worst. Just ask Costa Mesa, where Martin H. Millard, the ranting racist who got appointed to a redevelopment committee in 2002, once assumed the stereotypical voice of a Jew for a satirical essay that played up to his anti-Semitic readership (see Nick Schou's "Real Gene-ius," Aug. 16, 2006).

White-power bands played hate fests at the Shack in Anaheim, a long-gone venue that hosted such shows until being exposed in a *Weekly* cover story (see Rich Kane's "Springboard for Hitler," Sept. 6, 2001). More recently, our reporting brought the anti-Semitism and Holocaust denialism of Gracey Van Der Mark to greater attention, she ran for school board in Huntington Beach and lost in November 2018. And then there's the Rise Above Movement, a newly formed neo-Nazi group who assaulted *Weekly* reporters covering a pro-Trump rally in Huntington Beach two years ago, the FBI later arrested key members on rioting charges for political violence across the country.

This latest chapter of coastal anti-Semitism even reached the House of Representatives, with Californians Katie Porter of the 45th district and Harley Rouda of the 48th issuing strong statements.

"Last week, I met Sidney Walton, a 100-year-old [World War II] veteran who fought to eradicate Nazism," Rouda wrote. "The incident with the Newport Harbor High School students, like so many recent events across the country, is an example of this ruinous ideology trying to become mainstream again. We owe it to Sidney and our kids to call it out and not whitewash these moments of anti-Semitism and racism, whether in my district or anywhere else across the country."

In 2016, racial tensions at Newport Harbor simmered over the presidential campaign of Donald Trump. Administrators originally barred students from wearing "Dump Trump" shirts to school, but then allowed them. Other students scrawled pro-Trump and xenophobic messages on walls. Orange County Human Relations, through its Bridges program, sought to diffuse tensions and are on hand to help with the current swastika controversy.

"We will offer our support to the schools involved to help address this as needed on campus," says Alison Edwards, CEO of OC Human Relations. "It would be my hope that this is an opportunity for these communities to come out and show their support for a safe and inclusive community where all people are welcomed and images and actions like this are not acceptable."

An annual hate-crimes report put out by the OC Human Relations Commission late last year noted anti-Semitic hate crimes, including swastika vandalism, rose significantly in 2017.

On Monday, Newport Harbor students wore blue to take a united stance against anti-Semitism. Later that evening, a packed Newport Harbor Theater on campus played host to a community meeting in the wake of the controversy. While Newport-Mesa Unified trustee Ashley Anderson felt the district's response has been stronger than in the past, she had some constructive suggestions for the next gathering. "I was disappointed that there were no students of color asked to speak or on the stage at all," she says. "If we're talking about discrimination and the way that hate symbols impact people, there's a much wider range than only the Jewish community, although that is certainly a big focus."

Another meeting is scheduled for the evening of Thursday, March 14, at Corona del Mar High School; Anderson says the ADL is set to play a larger role there.

"It goes beyond just Holocaust education," Levi says. "We need to have a deep conversation about the diversity in our community that isn't a problem and isn't a challenge, but is a strength of what it means to be an American."

GSANROMAN@OCWEEKLY.COM

a clockwork orange»

» MATT COKER

Solution No. 2

Directly across the street from the *OC Weekly* world headquarters in Fountain Valley is the Orange County Sanitation District. I'll wait until you are done snickering.

[...]

Around the corner is the Orange County Water District, and within the grounds of both are facilities for the Groundwater Replenishment System, which turns human waste into purified water for irrigation, industrial uses and, yes, drinking water.

Before going online in January 2008, the so-called "toilet-to-tap" system was mocked by snark-slingers such as yours truly, but the remarkable recycler has won international praise, awards and, the sincerest form of compliment, imitation, especially in drought-plagued regions.

That is something to keep in mind with the latest poopy power proposal. The Southern California Gas Co. filed a plan with the California Public Utilities Commission on Feb. 28 to derive renewable natural gas from methane produced by waste not only from people, but also dairy cows.

The gas company contends the untapped clean energy source would help not only its 21 million Central and Southern California customers—who include residents, businesses and transportation providers—but also the planet because capturing methane before it enters the atmosphere would help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It's billed as being much cheaper and more effective than requiring all-electric kitchen appliances.

Likening the process to the consumer electricity programs created by solar panels and wind farms, SoCal Gas officials further propose that its customers be given the option of purchasing portions of their natural gas from renewable sources, something they contend will increase supply and drive down costs.

Two questions: Will supply keep up with demand enough that the gas and water companies won't go to war over the same dookie? And will capturing cow methane eliminate that awful smell that gets into my car vents while driving near Chino?

Just think! Poop from those dairy cows can create the natural gas that comes out of your stovetop as you heat milk from those dairy cows for the sauce with your entrée that will come out of you and help create the natural gas.... It's the circle of life, and the movements of us all.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Fire on Hole 18

BOB ALL

You were the golf fan in the Roger Dunn parking lot who took time out of your day to help me and my broken, old sports car that was lightly on fire. You pushed me to pry open the hood after the release cable broke, and even gave me the bottle of water that eventually put out the flames! Thanks again!

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com

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SHOOTS & LADDERS

IN ORANGE COUNTY—AS WELL AS EVERYWHERE ELSE—CHEAP, SUPER-POWERFUL HEROIN IS JUST ONE INTERNET CLICK AWAY

BY LIAM BLUME

Cameron King was lost.

He was driving his mother Sonia's pearl Cadillac Escalade around a Memphis, Tennessee, parking lot, with Sonia riding shotgun. They were on their way home from the Cheesecake Factory, where they'd eaten with Cameron's Aunt Carrie and his sisters Kaelah and Crista-Lynn. It was the final night of Cameron's trip home to Memphis. In the morning, he'd fly back to California, where he'd moved six months earlier.

But Cameron had a horrible sense of direction, even on familiar roads. He rambled the car down one wrong turn after another while Sonia laughed. The detours didn't bother her. This was one of the happiest nights she'd spent with her 21-year-old son. As they drove, Cameron charmed his mother with his soft, Southern twang, holding her hand, telling her he loved her and thanking her for being his mom. What made Sonia happiest was that her son had been sober for six months.

"I had never felt more joy than that night in my heart," Sonia says.

Up to then, Cameron had led a tumultuous life. His father was a union ironworker who sold meth on the side. He was an addict, too. Sonia left Cameron's father when Cameron was young; she raised her son with the help of her sister Carrie and her parents.

Sonia made a joyous life for him. As a boy, Cameron was happy and active. He was a Boy Scout and a football player, and he easily made friends. He was funny and charming, with a sideways smile. But being raised without a father left Cameron feeling different.

As do most teenagers, Cameron began smoking weed and drinking at parties. Before long, prescription opiates and amphetamines crept into Cameron's friend group. At the time, from 2014 to 2016, Tennessee had the third highest opioid-prescribing rates in the country, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

When Cameron was 18, his best friend Kyle Blevins died of an overdose. Cameron was shook, but he didn't sober up.

A year later, another friend, Mark, overdosed in the passenger seat of Cameron's truck while Cameron was driving. Cameron panicked, swerved and rolled his truck five times. Mark was ejected from the car and lay lifelessly beside the road. Paramedics revived Mark with naloxone, the opiate-overdose reversal drug, and the pair narrowly escaped tragedy.

"I was so scared," Sonia says. "I knew in my heart that he was with the same crowd of people and that this could happen to him at some point."

Cameron unsuccessfully began trying to get sober, first in Tennessee, then in New Orleans. By the time he reached California in August 2018, he seemed ready for sobriety. After completing a 30-day inpatient program in San Diego, Cameron came to San Clemente for sober living. He excelled in the program. He committed himself to attending AA meetings, helping his housemates in sober living, and got a job at the Dana Point Best Western.

"Such a sweet kid. He was always being of service to the guys in the house," says John C., Cameron's AA sponsor.

"I owe a lot to him," says Eric, Cameron's sober-living roommate. "He really got me out of my shell."

On Jan. 24, 2018, the morning after his car ride and trip to the Cheesecake Factory with his mother, Cameron left Tennessee and returned to San Clemente. He promised to remain sober and to Facetime his youngest sister, Crista-Lynn, for her birthday on April 14. But that call never came.

Cameron died of a heroin overdose on April 8, 2018.

Stories such as Cameron's are tragically familiar in Orange County, where there have been 4,480 overdose deaths since 1999. Compared to similar-sized counties in California, only San Diego County experiences more overdose deaths per 100,000 residents, stated Dr. Nichole Quick, deputy health officer for the OC Health Care Agency. Parts of Seal Beach, Huntington Beach and San Clemente, as well as neighborhoods off Beach Boulevard's Motel Row, experience death rates far above county and state averages.

Laws restricting opioid prescriptions—aimed at stopping the problem where it often begins, in doctors' offices—have been unsuccessful. OC saw a 15 percent decrease in opioid prescriptions since 2015, yet overdose-death rates and emergency-room visits continued climbing. While

prescription-overdose rates declined in the past 12 months, synthetic-opioid overdoses, namely from fentanyl and its minimally altered analogues, have climbed drastically.

Professors, public-health experts and criminologists agree the problem is worsening. Drugs tainted with fentanyl and easily accessible drugs will reportedly make 2018 the deadliest year for drug overdoses in OC.

You've probably heard news reports refer to fentanyl as "China White," however that hasn't always been the case. Through the 1970s and '80s, China White referred to highly refined, highly potent white heroin produced in the so-called "Golden Triangle," a mountainous area along the borders of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos. The drug was prevalent in OC back then, so much so that a Huntington Beach hardcore punk band named themselves after the drug. Even then, however, dealers sold fentanyl analogues as China White to unsuspecting buyers.

Globally, the first two reported deaths from a fentanyl analogue sold as China White occurred in Orange County in 1979, *Politico*'s Jack Shafer wrote in 1985. The drug was alpha-Methylfentanyl, similar to pharmaceutical fentanyl, but less potent and with longer lasting effects. Police had never seen the drug and it took years to determine what it was and why it was so lethal.

That trend continues today, as unidentified fentanyl analogues kill more people every year.

Aimee Dunkle founded Solace Foundation in 2015 after her son Ben died of a heroin overdose. She distributes free boxes of the opioid-reversal drug naloxone to people likely to witness an overdose and teaches people how to successfully save lives with it. In 2017 alone, Solace Foundation reversed 1,085 overdoses with naloxone. Dunkle also tests drugs for fentanyl contamination, and says contamination is increasing at alarming rates.

"Back in 2016, it was very specific that we had black tar [heroin], you didn't hear about China White," Dunkle says. "Suddenly, at the end of 2017, you hear all about China White." Dunkle estimates 95 percent of heroin in OC contains a fentanyl analogue.

Fentanyl contamination isn't confined to heroin. It's been found in everything from street-pressed Xanax and oxycodone to cocaine and methamphetamine. Dunkle began hearing about fentanyl contamination in 2017 after a Costa Mesa man was revived by naloxone after overdosing on cocaine. The cocaine must've been contaminated with fentanyl or another opiate because naloxone only reverses opioid overdoses. She began testing methamphetamine for fentanyl that summer, after a longtime meth user reported strange effects to Dunkle.

"I've been using meth for 20 years up in Los Angeles," he told Dunkle. "I've been in OC for six weeks, and every time I use the meth here, I fall asleep. What's with that?" Dunkle tested the man's bag and found it positive for fentanyl.

"Back in the day, there was pure meth," says Tom Buckley, CEO of the drug-treatment facility Pacific Solstice. Those days are gone. Users of contaminated meth unintentionally find themselves physically hooked on opiates.

But why would dealers cut their supply with fentanyl? When you consider the possibility of facing drug-induced homicide charges for selling a tainted bag alongside fentanyl's lethality—medicinal doses of intravenous heroin (diamorphine) range from 10 milligrams to 100 milligrams, while intravenous fentanyl ranges from 0.05 milligrams to 0.1 milligrams—cutting your supply with a deadlier drug doesn't make sense. And cutting a stimulant such as methamphetamine with a depressant makes even less sense, especially from a marketing perspective.

Both answers can be found by examining narcotics suppliers.

Fentanyl's cheap cost of production—which doesn't require laboring in poppy fields—as well as its laboratory-guaranteed potency, means that a miniscule amount can strengthen weak heroin. Also, because a kilo of fentanyl goes further than a kilo of heroin, much smaller quantities can be smuggled.

A 2017 DEA report supports this. Mexican black tar heroin, the most prevalent variety in California in 2015, was purest in San Diego (averaging 33.7 percent) and cheapest (37 cents per pure milligram). As it climbs the coast, purity decreases and cost rises. Los Angeles black tar averaged 21.6 percent purity at 80 cents per pure milligram, while San Francisco tar averaged 9 percent purity at $1.35 per pure milligram. Because distributors in each metropolitan region cut purity and raise prices, it's likely they could spike low-quality heroin with fentanyl to appease customers. Although San Diego was the only California city found to have fentanyl-tainted heroin in 2015, the report occured before the recent uptick of fentanyl deaths.

Feotanyl contamination in cocaine and methamphetamine isn't as common as it is in street-pressed Xanax, according to regular users. However, lacing stimulants with opioids would strengthen the drug's rush through a speedball effect. Methamphetamine and cocaine aren't physically addictive. Adding physically addictive drugs such as fentanyl would make quitting more painful for a dealer's customer base.

"This will reverberate for the next decade or longer," Buckley says. "The drug supply is tainted, and the amount of fentanyl that's out there … We've just scratched the surface. Our kids' kids are going to be affected by this."

Access to drugs online is as disturbing as contamination. Heroin, fentanyl, methamphetamine, Xanax, LSD, even DMT are easily found on OC Craigslist, if you know how to look. On a recent afternoon, simply by logging onto OC Craigslist, I found 13 dealers selling heroin, 25 selling methamphetamine, seven selling Xanax and four offering fentanyl. Drugs are advertised under nicknames such as "roofing tar" for heroin, "two-foot ladders" for Xanax, and "Chinese tiles" for fentanyl. Wondering why there's so much Tina Turner memorabilia and concert tickets on Craigslist, even though ALL her upcoming shows are in Europe? Because that's how you sell meth on Craigslist. And dealers offer their locations, phone numbers and names in these posts. Dealers avoid arrest by quickly removing posts and changing locations and phone numbers. Selling drugs online isn't new, but fentanyl's market dominance is.

Cal State Fullerton professor Jonathan Taylor and UCLA Ph.D. student Heather Agnew track the global drug market. Both agree that a majority of America's fentanyl is manufactured in China or a nearby country such as India. Both countries export vast quantities of chemicals, making smuggling fentanyl or its precursors to Mexico and America easy.

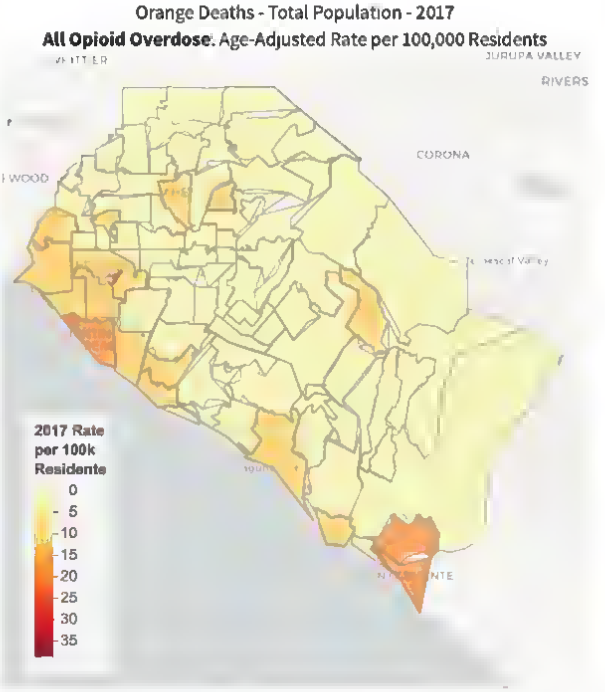
"A lot of [fentanyl is] being shipped to businesses that do a lot of transnational commerce. A huge hub for this kind of trafficking is in San Bernardino," Agnew says. Industrial manufacturing companies already purchase large quantities of chemicals from China. Therefore, shipping unmarked bags of white powder to these regions would elude suspicion. Coincidentally, most Craigslist dealers I saw selling cheap bulk quantities of fentanyl were in the Inland Empire.

Although Taylor hopes China's recent ban on fentanyl manufacturing will be successful, he believes chemists with strong connections to American or Mexican buyers could continue producing fentanyl without faltering. Chemists and potential drug traffickers often meet on dark websites such as Wall Street Market and Dream Market. If the partnership works, chemists and traffickers will conduct business directly, without middleman websites such as Dream Market. Access to fentanyl remains unfettered for these chemists and traffickers, even though Dream Market banned fentanyl in May 2018, Taylor says.

Online purchasing may affect those most vulnerable: people in treatment. Because many rehab clients aren't from OC and lack connections, Craigslist is often the first place they go to buy drugs after relapsing. A former rehab counselor, who agreed to speak anonymously, said he first heard about clients buying drugs off Craigslist in 2014, immediately after he began counseling.

"It seems to me that people who've bought off Craigslist don't have any fear of it being an undercover cop. It doesn't concern them that it's a sting," he said. Six months ago, three clients of his died in one week after responding to the same Craigslist ad, which was selling fentanyl-contaminated heroin.

For Cameron, online access to contaminated drugs proved fatal.



COURTESY OF LEAFLET / OPEN STREET MAP / CARTODB

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

CHEERS!

IT'S THE BEER ISSUE

PUBLISHES 3.14.19

» FROM PAGE 9

COURTESY OF KING FAMILY

After returning from Teonessee in January 2018, Cameron left treatment. A friend from meetings said he could sleep in the cabin of his boat in Dana Point Harbor for $600 per month. That was too expensive for Cameron alone, so he asked his best friend Jack to move in. Cameron would sleep in the main cabin, and Jack would take the couch. It seemed the perfect arrangement: Both were committed to sobriety and seemed to have promising futures.

But for Jack's father, John, who'd been sober for 18 years, it was troubling news. When Jack told John about the boat, John turned to his wife and said, "That's trouble. Both these kids are going to go out."

The relapse came in early March, about two months after Jack moved onboard. Jack had noticed Cameron acting strange, and then, one afternoon, Cameron greeted Jack with a pair of Four Lokos, caffeinated alcoholic beverages. The party was on. Soon after, the boys were drinking and smoking a little weed regularly.

"I was okay with just that," Jack recalls. "But I could see Cameron wanted more."

The boys met a cocaine connection at a Dana Point Circle K. A week later, they met the same connection at a Chevron off Camino Real in San Clemente, but this time, he had something different.

"The guy said his coke was shitty but he's got this," Jack recalls Cameron saying as he showed his friend a gram of heroin.

"My case of fuck-its was so bad, I said, 'Let's do it,'" Jack says. "It was the first time I'd ever done it."

The pair got high that night, chasing tar on foil.

When Jack awoke the next day, he felt foggy and sick. At work that morning, he couldn't focus. "I can't be around this," he thought.

Jack slept all day Saturday, woke up on Sunday, packed a bag and moved back into the Dana Point sober-living facility in which he and Cameron had met eight months before.

In the following weeks, Cameron resisted intervention attempts by Jack and other friends, but eventually, on April 4, Cameron called John C., his AA sponsor, and admitted he'd relapsed. "All right, let's move forward," John C. had said. "Let's not look back. You relapsed, shit happens. Let's get back on track."

The two met the next day, a Thursday, went to a meeting and planned on attending another meeting together on Friday night in the harbor, within walking distance of the boat. But Cameron didn't show up. People began to worry when he didn't answer his phone on Saturday and Sunday.

Around noon that Monday, Jack and a friend named Trevor walked down to the boat to check on Cameron. Police helicopters circled the harbor, responding to a man who died after crashing a boat into the jetty that morning. "Something doesn't feel right," Jack thought as he and Trevor approached the boat.

The boys called Cameron's name. There was no response.

"Hey, huddy, what's up," Jack said, sliding back the wooden door to the cabin and looking inside.

Cameron wasn't on the disheveled bed. He wasn't on the couch.

Jack looked down and saw Cameron on the stairs leading to the door, face-down and shirtless with a belt around his arm.

"Call 911," Jack shouted, but he already knew Cameron was gone.

Jack's father, John, was at the scene when OCSD investigators arrived. Police were certain that fentanyl, or an analogue, was the cause of death. "Dealers don't know how to dose the fentanyl," the investigators told John, "so they up the dose till someone dies, and then they back off."

The speed of Cameron's death also pointed to fentanyl. According to the investigators, it appeared as if Cameron knew he'd taken too much and tried walking outside for help before collapsing.

Dunkle, who's revived people from heroin and fentanyl overdoses, agrees. The difference, she explained, is that a heroin overdose can take an hour or more to kill, while a fentanyl overdose can kill almost instantly. Although the coroner's report found no fentanyl in Cameron's system, the plethora of fentanyl analogues mean that their presence is hard to detect. Jack and others report that Cameron couldn't have picked up from his San Clemente dealer because he had no transportation, instead, they believe Cameron purchased that fatal dose from a Craigslist dealer who delivered the drugs to him.

"So many people that come out for treatment don't care. Cameron didn't have that feel," John says. "When I first met him, I said, 'Cam, you can walk in my house any time. If you need any help, let me know.'"

Numerous others say they wouldn't be sober today, if not for Cameron. He was an active member of his community who slipped. This could happen to anyone.

There are two important lessons in Cameron's story. One: Relapse is common. According to Dr. David Deyhimy, an anesthesiologist and medical director of OC Addiction Treatment Services and My

MAT Clinic, 90 percent to 95 percent of recovering opioid addicts in abstinence-based treatment relapse within a year.

And two: It's easy to access fentanyl-contaminated heroin.

In an article for *Justice Quarterly*, published Jan. 21, Christopher Contreras, a UC Irvine Ph.D. student in criminology, notes that rising drug use in a community correlates with rising violence. "Residential stability and high socioeconomic status do not necessarily buffer blocks with drug trafficking against rising robbery and burglary rates," Contreras writes. "Instead, blocks with narcotics activity bring in serious, high-rate offenders, such as drug users, who may commit robberies and burglaries for drug money." Additionally, because drug markets aren't static, they can quickly shift from city to city. In other words, OC's affluence won't protect its residents from drug-related crimes if the spread of drugs continues.

Since police alone can't be expected to solve the problem, harm reduction may be the best solution.

In 2017, when Dunkle had a central location to distribute naloxone, overdose rates decreased. However, when the OC Needle Exchange Program was shut down in January 2018, rates began rising.

"In 2016, we had 336 deaths. [In] 2017, we had 304 [255 were opioid related]. I literally bought all the naloxone that was distributed," Dunkle says.

In that time, overdose-death rates in San Diego, Los Angeles and Oakland were higher than the year before. "Orange County was the only one that was down," she says. "That in itself is an indicator of what happens when you have a centralized location for harm reduction." Dunkle believes that three centralized naloxone distribution locations—one each in North, South and Central OC—would greatly reduce the county's death rate.

Medication assisted treatment (MAT) has also proven effective. It combines the use of drugs such as Suboxone, a low-addiction-risk opioid, and methadone with behavioral therapy. According to Deyhimy, "When you stabilize with buprenorphine, all drug use decreases by 50 percent. These folks are getting the behavioral treatment they need, plus MAT." Deyhimy added that patients undergoing MAT experienced a 50 percent abstinence rate after one year. Without MAT, recovering opioid addicts were 3.5 to 10 times more likely to die of an overdose.

Orange County currently offers MAT, but we could improve. "Five percent of U.S. doctors have a licence to prescribe [Suboxone], and of those, only a fraction actually prescribe it because insurance payments are very poor, and many doctors simply give up," Deyhimy says.

Switzerland's MAT program, which provided free injections of clean heroin for patients, effectively eliminated that country's heroin crisis during the 1990s. Since 1991, there has been a 50 percent reduction of overdose death, an 80 percent reduction of incidence of starting heroin use and a 65 percent reduction of HIV infections, according to Ambros Uchtenhagen of the Research Institute for Public Health and Addiction. The medical journal *Lancet* concluded, "The harm reduction policy of Switzerland and its emphasis on the medicalisation of the heroin problem seems to have contributed to the image of heroin as unattractive for young people."

Such an effort in Orange County would rely on a commitment from policy makers, police and the community to address opioid addiction medically. Otherwise, senseless deaths and crime will increase.

Unfortunately, this might not be enough. In the Feb. 23 issue of *The Economist*, a trio of Stanford public-health experts say that increasing naloxone distribution and MAT will decrease deaths by 4.1 percent and 2.4 percent respectively, over the next six years. Restricting opioid prescriptions, however, would result in a sharp increase in deaths, as people switch from pills to street opiates. The experts expect to record 500,000 overdose deaths between 2016 and 2025. According to the *Economist* article, "Even if America introduced all the policies likely to save lives, deaths over the next decade will drop by just 12.2 percent."

Dr. Deyhimy introduced this bleak future at a town hall meeting in January. "We're going to continue seeing lots of deaths each year in increasing number, and it's going to be due to the fact that fentanyl is basically available on the internet," he said. "Anyone can buy it."

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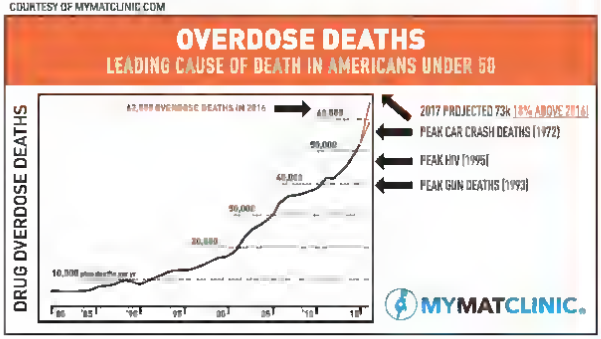
COURTESY OF MYMATCLINIC.COM



LEAVE THE ZAMBONI AT HOME

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OCWEEKLY ORANGE COUNTY'S LEADING SOURCE OF NEWS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

JUSTIN BROADHENT

fri/03/08

[FESTIVAL]

HOT INK
Musink

For the 12th edition of the Musink fest, Travis Barker will once again combine the worlds of music and tattooing to create an extravaganza that caters to fans of both art forms. Saturday's main event, Limp Bizkit, will no doubt elicit opinions from fans one way or another, whether that be loved or loathed. If you don't want to break stuff or do it for the nookie, have no fear. Punk and hard rock outfits are featured all weekend, with Suicidal Tendencies and the Vandals headlining sets. Plus, Musink also offers daily tattoo contests, a vendor village and other activities, including the Low 'N' Slow Car Show.

Musink Music Festival and Tattoo Convention at OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 704-1500; musinkfest.com. 3 p.m.; also Sat.-Sun. $29.50-$199.50. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

[FAMILY EVENTS]

After-Hours Fun
Night at the Cube

Though we can't promise that various exhibits will come to life as they did in *Night at the Museum*, this opportunity to spend an entire evening exploring the Discovery Cube will surely be a memorable one! Great for all ages, this event also provides such activities as a 3D movie, a late-night snack, breakfast and complimentary access to the Cube on the following day. Among the exhibits guests will get to explore are "Dino Quest," "Mission Control," "Water Gallery" and "Science of Hockey." Dig out your old sleeping bag, and sign up now!

MORE » ONLINE
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Night at the Cube, 2500 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 542-2823, www.discoverycube.org. 6 p.m. $65-$75. 4+. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

sat/03/09

[CONCERT]

DREAMS SO REAL
Metric

Formed in 1998, this Canadian indie-rock synth/pop band fronted by Emily Haines has won multiple music awards for their modernized new wave repertoire. Their seventh album, *Art of Doubt*, which was released last year, was hailed by longtime fans as a brilliant return to the group's harder-core roots, and critics for such notable music mags as *Pitchfork* have praised the band for being "immune to trends," noting one of the band's recent lyrics, "I change by staying the same." Now's your chance to dive into the layers of their lush, poetic tales—you may never come back.

Metric with Zoe and July Talk at the House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 520-2334, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim. 9 p.m. $56. —SR DAVIES

[PODCAST]

Strange Tales
Welcome to Night Vale Live Podcast

The mysterious lights above the Arby's sign, Carlos, the scientist with perfect hair, the ALMIGHTY GLOW CLOUD—if these things hold a special place in your heart, then you're familiar with one of the most innovative podcasts of our time. Years before every pseudo-philosophizing jock you loathed in high school started channeling their inner Rex Brogan, *Welcome to Night Vale* immersed listeners in a surreal, dystopian world of its own. Surely this night will serve as reminder that, as director Cecil Baldwin says, "We lead frantic lives, filled with needs and responsibilities, but completely devoid of any actual purpose."

Welcome to Night Vale Live Podcast at City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 712-2700, citynationalgroveofanaheim.com. 8 p.m. $27.50. —STEVE DONOFRIO

sun/03/10

[FOOD & DRINK]

Pour It Up

Wine Cocktails

Day-drinking season is nearly upon us. And for those who know that guzzling juice-and-vodka concoctions whilst in the hot sun all day usually leads to bad, bad things, you may want to explore other options. Start by checking out this Wine Cocktails class, hosted by Sarah Whittenberg, who also writes the food-and-drink blog *The Dilettante's Table*. You'll learn a few wine-based drinks such as sangria, vermouth spritzers and more, and guests will receive copies of the recipes to take home. Bonus: If you just can't wait until spring to start mixing big batches of vino-based booze, the wines used in these recipes are available for purchase during the class. Happy drinking!

Wine Cocktails at Alta Baja Market, 201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 783-2252, www.altabajamarket.com. 2 p.m. RSVP required. —ERIN DEWITT

[THEATER]

Oh, Bondage, Up Yours!

Suprema

DC Comics fans know that Wonder Woman creator William Moulton Marston was a psychological researcher, inventor, huckster, proto-feminist activist and enthusiastic bondage fetishist. Or they would, if they'd read historian Jill Lepore's amazing *The Secret History of Wonder Woman*, the life story of the inventor of the he detector, including his serial lying, polyamorous love life and kinks. Fullerton's STAGEStheatre presents the origin story of the divine Amazon with an invisible plane. She gets playwright and standup comic Philip Keeling's self-described "sex comedy" treatment in *Suprema*, which plays the story for laughs, as in smart, satirical and absurdist wonder.

Suprema at STAGEStheatre, 400 E. Commonwealth Ave., Ste. 4, Fullerton, (714) 525-4484, stagesoc.org. 5:30 p.m. Through March 30. $22-$24. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

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mon/03/11

[CONCERT]

The *Tejano* Touch

Piñata Protest

Hailing from San Antonio, Texas, Piñata Protest bring punk rock and Tex-Mex music with an unconventionally fun and irreverent sound that's also somehow inherently political. In both English and Spanish, the *chavos* sing songs about the border, working-class Mexican folks, political hypocrisy and cheap thrills, with the occasional love song. The band, who have been around for more than 10 years and have played the southwest often, are currently on a tour that takes them (and their accordion) to the Slidebar tonight. *¡Ayua!*

Piñata Protest at Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-2233, www.pinataprotestband.com. 7 p.m. Free. 21+. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/03/12

[FOOD & DRINK]

Vegan Victory

Taco Tuesday

The Orange County Vegan Village takes the classic Taco Tuesday and puts an animal-product-free spin on it. Vendors from near and far will provide tacos for people of all ages and dietary restrictions, and if you're one of the lucky few, free treats and meals might be randomly handed to you. Previous events have included Chicana Vegana and Munchies OC, stop by tonight to explore the cruelty-free side of Mexican food and possibly find a new favorite vegan spot in OC.

OC Vegan Village presents Taco Tuesday at From the Earth USA, 3023 S. Orange Ave., Santa Ana, (657) 444-7336; www.ocveganvillage.com. 6 p.m. Free; tacos sold separately. —LAUREN GALVAN

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wed/03/13

[ART]

Fashion Forward

'Guo Pei: Couture Beyond'

Move over, Givenchy; couture is coming to town. Fashionistas, historians and lovers of beauty will rejoice as Guo Pei brings her ethereal works to Santa Ana's Bowers Museum. China's world-renowned couturière celebrates her cultural heritage through textiles and fabrics and blends high-fashion artistry with her country's rich history, fairy tales and military influences. Celebrities, royalty and the fashion elite wear her designs as a statement, while the rest of us sigh, fawn and only dream of wearing her exquisite creations. Seemingly made for goddesses, with detailed embroidery and bead work that speaks of a time long past, her delightful creations are also modern and fresh. These aren't just show stoppers—Guo Pei's exquisite couture is the show.

"Guo Pei: Couture Beyond" at Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600, www.bowers.org. 10 a.m. Through July 14. $10-$13. —LILA SHAKTI

[FILM]

IRON MAN

The Terminator

The first and still best in its series, *The Terminator* has been called by many more of a slasher film than a sci-fi or action flick, and there's a lot of truth to that. But there's an extra existential shock that *Halloween* or *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* don't have: In *Terminator*, the whole world is gonna die. It's that combination of street-level survival and total civilizational annihilation (a machine crushing a skull, a durable image!) that makes the original *Terminator* a classic. It's about fear, fear of death, and how the best you can ever do is to get away for a little longer. Grim, but you can't deny it. Maybe it takes a Cyberdyne Systems 101 to truly recognize the human condition. Like the man says, "It can't be bargained with. It can't be reasoned with. And it absolutely will not stop, ever, until you are dead."

The Terminator at South Coast Village, 1561 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701, regencymovies.com. 7:30 p.m. $8.50. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

thu/03/14

[FESTIVALS]

GREAT SCOT! Scottish Music Tattoo & Parade

Tradition meets celebration at the Musco Center tonight with the Edinburgh Tattoo ensemble, who perform for the Scottish Music Tattoo & Parade. This group of world-renowned bagpipers, drummers and singers will be performing classic hymns and busting out their take on many modern-rock pieces. The program merges electric guitar and traditional Scottish instruments with lilts performed by dancers in beautiful costumes, evoking the festive spirit of Scotland. Traditionally used to announce the arrival of enemy soldiers, the brigade now serves a ceremonial purpose often featured at the Edinburgh Castle Esplanade. This event filled with history and pride urges you to grab your kilt to participate in this "firework of music."

Scottish Music Tattoo & Parade at the Musco Center for the Arts at Chapman University, 1 University Dr., Orange, (844) 626-8726, muscocenter.org. 7:30 p.m. $45-$65. —MORGAN EDWARDS

[CONCERT]

Yes, We're Ready

Dee Dee Bridgewater and the Memphis Soulphony

Very few musicians are as distinguished as the legendary Dee Dee Bridgewater. Over the course of her 53-year career, she has shared the stage with such jazz greats as Max Roach, Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Dizzy Gillespie, as well as released 19 of her own solo albums. On her most recent album, 2017's *Memphis ... Yes, I'm Ready*, Bridgewater embraced her soul roots by performing her own interpretations of classic songs made famous by the likes of B.B. King, Mahalia Jackson and Big Momma Thornton, accompanied by members of the original Hi Records house band. She'll be bringing her new band, the Memphis Soulphony, to UC Irvine's Barclay Theatre for an intimate performance.

Dee Dee Bridgewater and the Memphis Soulphony at Irvine Barclay Theatre, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine, (949) 854-4646; www.thebarclay.org. 8 p.m. $45-$110. —STEVE DONOFRIO

The Square Root of Pie

Detroit-style pies arrive in Orange County with Steel Pan Pizza

BY EDWIN GOEI

Have you had Detroit-style pizza? Even if you think you haven't, chances are good that you have. It's identifiable by a square shape and thick crust, and Detroit is where Little Caesar's originated. So if you were a kid in the '90s and attended any sort of birthday party, you were most likely fed square, thick-crust pizza. The pizza was popular back then because it was cheap. Thanks to the chain's now-infamous "Pizza! Pizza!" promotion, it also, if not exactly on purpose, introduced all of America to the Detroit-style pie—or, at least, a fast-food facsimile of it.

At those parties, I had my share of Little Caesar's pizzas, and aside from the corner pieces, where the cheese burned into the crust, my memories of them are probably in line with yours: I thought they were terrible. But that didn't sour me—or the rest of the pizza-eating public—on the style. In fact, if you haven't noticed, Detroit pizza is having its Nashville Hot Chicken moment right now.

MORGAN EDWARDS

The story of its origins traces back to 1946, when August "Gus" Guerra started repurposing the square pans used for carrying nuts and bolts at car factories to bake his Sicilian-style dough. He served the pizza at his tavern, Buddy's Rendezvous, which eventually evolved into Buddy's Pizza, which now has outlets throughout Michigan. But it wasn't until around eight years ago that the Detroit style started becoming popular outside of the state.

According to *Esquire Magazine*, the trend seems to have been sparked by two pizza joints. The first is VIA 313, which opened in 2011 in Austin, Texas. Around the same time, Tony's Pizza Napoletana by Tony Gemignani—the 13-time World Pizza Champion—started offering the style at his San Francisco spot. The magazine credits Gemignani as the first person to sell Detroit pizza in California. Since then, pizzaiolos all over the map have been baking up their own renditions.

Apart from the square pan and the deep-dish thickness of the crust, all Detroit-style pies share hallmarks that distinguish them from, say, a Chicago pie. First is the crispy cheese that fuses to the edges. By anyone's definition, it's not a Detroit-style pizza unless enough cheese melts and caramelizes around the outside borders to form the same crunchy substance that leaks out of your quesadilla. This is achieved by applying Wisconsin brick cheese all the way up to where the dough touches the side of the pan. This is to ensure that some of the cheese gets in between the gap. The second defining characteristic is a decorative finishing stripe of marinara placed on top.

Although the new Steel Pan Pizza in Santa Ana's 4th Street Market food court uses mozzarella instead of Wisconsin brick for its Detroit-style pies, the edges are perfectly crisp. As with Parallel Pizzeria in Dana Point, which faithfully re-creates New Haven-style pizza down to mimicking Connecticut water by adding algae, Steel Pan Pizza abides by the Detroit-style gospel. The pie it calls "Classic Detroit" has the signature marinara stripe, but most important is that the dough is essentially fried as it sits and bakes in those well-oiled steel pans. The result is a consistently crunchy bottom crust. The rest of it is airy and focaccia-like—a well-yeasted bread that rises to about a half-inch and is able to withstand a mountain of toppings.

The pizza called "Nuts and Bolts" is exactly what this kind of dough is designed for. It bears the standard pizza toppings—spicy pepperoni cups and cut-up Italian sausage, olives, mushrooms, bell peppers and red onions—but they're crammed into such a small area that they're not so much baked into the cheese as they are just sitting on top in a pile. Trying to pick it up with your hands causes all the toppings to topple onto your lap. As such, you wouldn't be faulted for knife-and-forking it.

Whether you try that pizza or the "Steel Pan Style"—which tastes uncannily similar to Costco's Chicken Bake, with its white sauce, chicken, bacon, mushrooms and dressed arugula—you can get away with ordering just one pizza for two people. These pizzas may appear to be individually sized and comprise four small slices, but they're surprisingly filling. You need only two slices per person.

And it's exactly because they're molded into those small steel pans that every slice of pizza here is guaranteed to have two crispy edges per piece. This part is important because, as I've learned from those childhood pizza parties, you always want the corner piece.

STEEL PAN PIZZA
201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, www.steelpanpizzaco.com. Pizzas, $8-$12.

WHAT THE ALE
» GREG NAGEL

Shelf Life

Craft beer is best consumed fresh, especially the world's most iconic style, the India Pale Ale. But many new beer fans buy as much of a hyped stout as they can, telling themselves that cellaring it will make the brew improve over time. Though most beer will change over time, the sad truth is that doesn't necessarily means it improves.

Aging beer will often soften big, bold flavors and tame boozy alcohol heat. And then there are the cellar dumpster fires, in which a tiny colony of microbes that may have replicated in the bottle can make the beer unintentionally sour or even explode. Most small breweries package beer with a moderate level of dissolved oxygen (DO), which can take on a wet cardboard flavor in a couple of years. Beers brewed with coffee, vanilla, fruit or other creative adjuncts will fade into a shadow of their former selves.

Upon seeing Valiant Brewing's second-anniversary beer on a store shelf recently, a little curiosity got the best of me. It was a $13 gamble, but sometimes a 4-year-old beer can be awesome sauce.

Sadly, it gave a gentle hiss as I opened it, a sign that it had lost its carbonation. I sniffed the ullage for obvious flaws, then poured a sample into a Glen cairn glass to let it open up. Ugh. Notes of candied pecans, medicine and wet cardboard, with a distinct leather-shoe-polish aroma. Gross.

Moral of the story: Check the bottle dates, avoid beer from closed breweries, and drink fresh!

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

A Gastropub Evolved

Pigburd takes its food 'serious AF'

ERIN DEWITT

LONG BEACH LUNCH

» ERIN DEWITT

Late last year, Alsatian restaurant 4th & Olive announced its last day of operation. It looked like yet another shuttering of a cool local eatery, of which we have dishearteningly seen several in the past few months. But out of 4th & Olive's ashes, Pigburd was born. "It's the crew from 4th & Olive, but with new executive chef Raquel Jubran," explains owner/general manager Dan Tapia. "So, it's less of a rebranding and more of a new concept, with a new chef driving it."

Tapia, a Navy veteran who has worked in restaurants since his teen years, is a sommelier with experience at Mozza and Bouchon Beverly Hills. Co-owner Jubran, an Air Force veteran who also worked with Lasher's Kitchen (both old and new versions), as well as the Attic, is helping to steer Pigburd's menu in a locally sourced direction. The new restaurant's website offers clear information about the kitchen's preparation methods, as well as the ranches and farms the staff source from (it should also be noted the butchering is done in-house). Pigburd declares itself "a higher level of eating" that "rebel[s] against the cookie cutter gastropub." And if this menu is any indication of what Pigburd stands for, then we're absolutely here for it.

An unabashedly decadent option, the duck liver mousse is downright dreamy. Rich, dense and velvety, the pâté is served in a ramekin and accompanied by sharp pickled vegetables (tiny carrots, fuchsia-colored onions, actual pickles) and chewy slices of house-baked sourdough bread. According to the menu, the mousse is "like meat butter," but that's a humble understatement of the depth of flavor found in its little bowl.

Still in its soft-opening stage, the restaurant divides its dishes into five categories: tapas, salads, snacks, burgers and entrées. The Chickories Salad is described as "a little bit bitter and earthy" and comes with pancetta and roasted chickpeas. There's vegan chili and vegan polenta cakes, plus a Cauli-fornia burger (with a cauliflower meat-alternative) topped with herb pesto and almond relish.

Tapia says Pigburd boasts many house specialties, including the lentil shepard's pie, tamarind wings, house-made beef jerky (hot and peppery squares with succulent strips of smoked fat marbling each one), ginger branzino "and a whole bunch more awesome stuff."

Though the entire menu is both thoughtfully composed and imaginative, there are a few standouts. For instance, behold the Tommy 4 Two. "Two huge pork chops the size of your head. Almost. Depending on the person."

But if a best dish must be awarded, that prize goes to the lobster paella. Presented in a cast-iron skillet, this artfully designed, fat-grained rice dish is loaded with white branzino, clams, mussels, sausage and bright-red hunks of lobster, all steeped in a buttery, herby, lemony broth, of which every last drop will be scraped from the pan.

For early risers, the restaurant offers breakfast, too. "[Our breakfast menu] has about six different chicken-and-biscuit sammies that will cure a broken soul," Tapia says. Still being finalized, breakfast is currently only available Wednesday through Sunday.

An official grand opening date is looming, but things seem to be running well during the interim. Aside from the lack of signage, a passerby would have no hint that Pigburd is still in its soft-opening phase. That's because good things take time, and they're not into rushing the process. "We wanted to develop a dining experience where we can have a chill, laid-back night with the community," says Tapia. "But we still take our food serious AF."

PIGBURD
743 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 269-0731, www.pigburd.com

GREG NAGEL

Look to the Sunny Side

Brunch at Sapphire Laguna

EAT & DRINK THIS NOW
» GREG NAGEL

"Let's do brunch," my wife says one quiet Saturday morning. 'After all the rain, I'm dying to get someplace nice with a patio heater and mimosas."

I put on my brunch pants and tried to come up with a location. "You write a fricken food column, and you don't even know where to get brunch?" she mocked.

The struggle is real. Brunch, I feel, is overrated.

See, I'm a boring routine guy. I wake up at 7, make a perfect egg flipped in a pan, which sits with some sort of aged Cheddar broiled on craggy toast, then topped with whatever fast-food hot-sauce packet I have lingering around. Brunch, at least to me, is like succumbing to a local vacation; instead of a 20-minute, satisfying meal at home, you end up with a $100 morning booze session topped with a pre-marathon carbload, followed by more day drinking, maybe a solid nap—or both.

"Ooh, Sapphire Laguna," I say, proudly. It's that perfect, chef-driven spot across from the beach, with parking, a patio, heat lamps and, hopefully, not a long wait. As a bonus, the Saturday-morning drive along the 133 freeway to Ocean Avenue is half the fun, thanks to a recurring daydream I have of playing dulcimers in the back of a fully modified 1981 CJ at Jeeps R Us in Laguna.

Though executive chef Azmin Ghahreman has run the iconic Sapphire Laguna for a dozen years, he keeps the menu fresh not only month to month and season to season, but also plate to plate. Case in point: The eggs Benedict is an ever-evolving item that offers a traditional perfectly poached egg with hollandaise and Canadian bacon but paired with a monthly inspiration. During our visit, it had a roasted-tomato base, smoked salmon and thinly sliced red onions. It was not necessarily like a shakshuka, but a bagelless-lox prep, which is incredible. The big, fluffy buttermilk pancakes also get a monthly revamp.

Taking inspiration from his time living in Asia, Australia, Hawaii, Europe and the Middle East, every dish Ghahreman serves seems to somehow pull little bits of influence not only with ingredients, but also in technique. One classic that has earned a permanent spot on the menu is the braised-pork chile verde, with its balance of chiles, tomatillos and creamy avocado. Schmear the avocado on the steamy, fresh corn tortilla as though you were making avocado toast, fold it in half, then dip it through the meaty-limey brunch moat for ultimate satisfaction.

Twenty bucks gets you a Spanish sparkling-wine mimosa with orange, mango or grapefruit that's refillable for two hours, but the recently updated house cocktail list is always worthy of exploration. Beer geeks should go for the Thorn Brewing lager-based michelada, but the floral pear b sangria is also good. Try it all. It's only brunch!

SAPPHIRE LAGUNA
1200 S. Coast Hwy., Ste. 101, Laguna Beach, (949) 715-9888; www.sapphirelaguna.com

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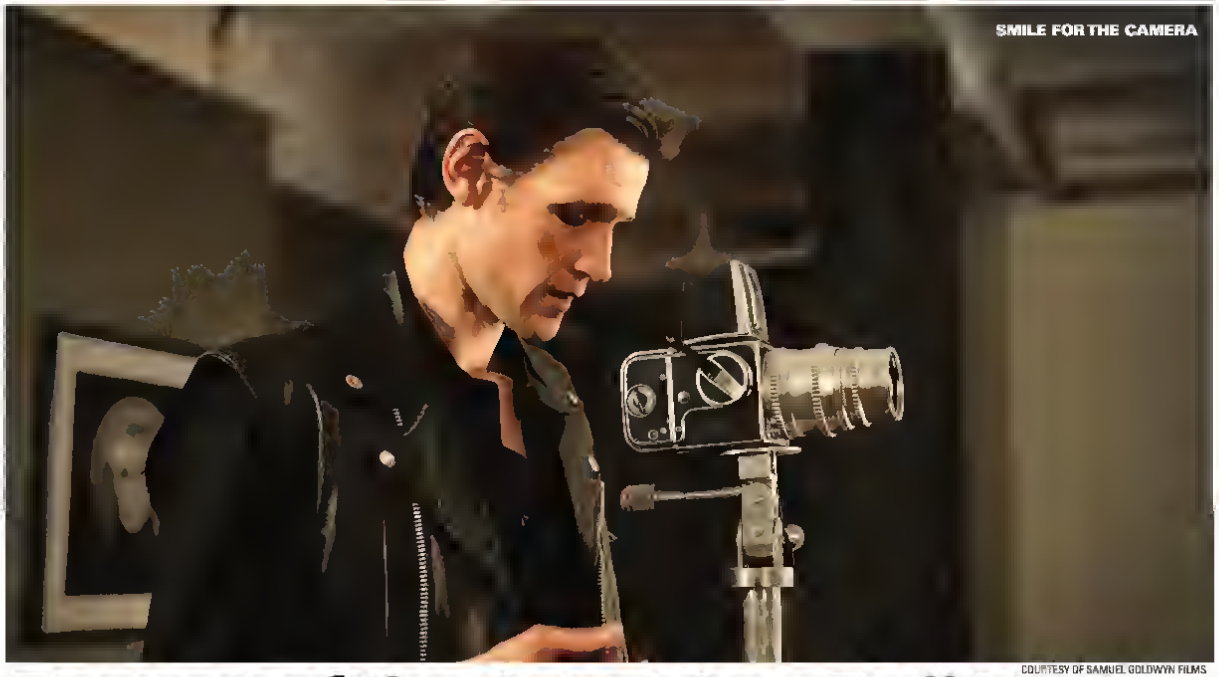

SMILE FOR THE CAMERA

COURTESY OF SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS

Portrait of the Artist As a Dull Man

Mapplethorpe presents a sanitized picture of the provocative artist

BY AIMEE MURILLO

For so long, photographer Robert Mapplethorpe was almost always discussed in the same breath as his onetime partner, rock star and poet Patti Smith. True art connoisseurs, however, know him to be one of the most controversial photographers of recent memory, famously sending the art world into a pornography debate a year after his death in 1989 when the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati was charged with obscenity while hosting a traveling retrospective of his work; that same year, Washington's Corcoran Gallery of Art dropped the show completely.

Mapplethorpe, who photographed celebrities, friends, underground gay BDSM clubs, hardcore sex acts, nudes and flowers in breathtaking black and white, has been well-deserving of a film of his own for a while, and he was recently featured in two HBO's documentary *Look at the Pictures* and Ondi Timoner's woefully unexciting *Mapplethorpe*. *Mapplethorpe* meanders aimlessly through the life of the artist (played by *Doctor Who* actor Matt Smith) as his career is buoyed by admiring onlookers of his work and lovers, from art dealer Sandy Daley, who handed Mapplethorpe a Polaroid camera during his struggling Hotel Chelsea days and sealed his fate as photographer, to wealthy benefactor Sam Wagstaff, with whom Mapplethorpe enjoyed a loving relationship for a while.

Timoner and co-writer Mikko Alanne follow the basic tenets of a run-of-the-mill biopic to tell Mapplethorpe's tale, but they forgot to give their subject a soul. After all, this is the photographer who was able to capture the dynamic energy of men in sexual congress in one photograph, while staging a beautiful still life of lilies in another. All of his work was pointedly shot with a specific gaze that sought beauty across a diverse spectrum of subjects, so you know the man contained multitudes. But this Mapplethorpe is dull at best, despite Smith's competent performance skills. At his worst, he's a raging sex and drug addict, willing to exploit whomever for the perfect shot. The film follows him as he descends into his addictions until his death from AIDS in 1989. Flatline. Post script. End credits.

Smith does what he can to make his character interesting, and there are so many moments of fine madness and libertine sexiness he inserts that bring the drama, but not even the sight of Smith's naked glutes can stop his Mapplethorpe from coming across as aloof and unlikeable. That Mapplethorpe's art is so beautiful is what is supposed to redeem him, it seems, but that's not great storytelling—it's lazy filmmaking.

Mapplethorpe strikes through bullet points of eventful years in the artist's life, punctuated by random archival footage. For instance, an inter title tells you it's 1981, followed by footage of Pac-Man, then footage of John McEnroe in a tennis match—in case you needed it to *feel* as if it were 1981.

Before then, in 1967, Mapplethorpe met Patti Smith (Marianne Rendon). And in their scenes together, Rendon and Smith bring a sweetness and vulnerability to the legendary duo's bohemian youth, which is a quality the rest of the film sorely lacks.

Their ragamuffin Camelot is upended when Mapplethorpe experiences gay love with David Croland (Thomas Philip O'Neill), and from there, it's not clear whether the film is subtly vilifying his hedonistic lifestyle with his eventual AIDS diagnosis. Nor are many of the other gay characters, save for Sam Wagstaff (John Benjamin Hickey), given much to do or say beyond being Mapplethorpe's willing photographic subjects (and sexual playthings).

Despite the stellar cast and the fact that the film is supported by the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation (interestingly, it is not supported by Smith herself, and that's a red flag if I ever heard of one), *Mapplethorpe* is frustratingly unsatisfying as a biopic. Sure, it lays out his life story and presents his abrasive personality as honestly as it can, but there's so little insight into his creative process as an artist or discussion as to how his work affected people beyond his close circle—or anything that makes a subject interesting enough to have a biopic made about him.

"Beauty and the devil are the same thing to me," Smith's Mapplethorpe declares early in the film. Who would have thought the person quoted as saying something as provocative as that could be made to look so uninteresting.

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

MAPPLETHORPE

was directed by Ondi Timoner, written by Timoner and Mikko Alanne, and stars Matt Smith, Marianne Rendon and John Benjamin Hickey

All You Need Are Jelly Babies and a Scarf

BY MATT COKER

DOCTOR WHO: LOGOPOLIS

FATHOM EVENTS

Raw Julia Ducournau's 2017 feature writing/directing debut. A vegetarian college freshman (Garance Marillier) is forced during a hazing ritual to try meat for the first time. That awakens a new desire to munch on human flesh. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., March 7, 2:30, 5:30 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.*

***BlacKkKlansman* With Oscar-Winning Writers Charlie Wachtel and David Rabinowitz.** The duo, who, along with Kevin Willmott and director Spike Lee, recently won the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay, participate in an audience Q&A after the screening of the 2018 bio-drama. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Thurs., March 7, 7 p.m. Free, but seating is first come, first served.*

***Un paese quasi perfetto* (*An Almost Perfect Country*)** Massimo Gaudioso's 2016 comedy about inhabitants of a remote, dying village doing everything it takes to make a new factory succeed. *Regency San Juan Capistrano, (949) 661-3456. Thurs., March 7, 7 p.m. $9.50-$12.50.*

Mantrap Clara Bow plays Alverna, a lonely young wife who grows tired of living in the sticks with her Canadian husband, Joe (Ernest Torrence). When his strapping divorce-lawyer friend Ralph (Percy Marmont) shows up for a vacation from women, Alverna makes her move. Award-winning composer Michael Mortilla accompanies on piano. *Muckenthaler Cultural Center; themuck.org. Thurs., March 7, 7:30 p.m. $15-$30.*

Captain Marvel As Carol Danvers (Brie Larson) becomes one of the universe's most powerful heroes, a galactic war between two alien races reaches Earth. Presented with Korean subtitles and in ScreenX format. *CGV Cinemas at the Source OC; thesourceoc.com. Thurs., March 7, 8 & 10:50 p.m.; Fri.-Wed., 10:30 a.m., 1:30, 4:50, 8 & 10:50 p.m. $12-$17.50.*

They Shall Not Grow Old Peter Jackson's "most personal" film shares the authentic experiences of British soldiers who lived them. *Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Thurs., March 7, 8:45 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

The Wedding Guest A British Muslim man travels to Pakistan to attend a wedding—and kidnap the bride-to-be. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Opens Fri. Call for show times and ticket prices.*

Climax A celebration by a troupe of young dancers turns nightmarish when they realize the sangria they have been pounding is spiked with powerful LSD. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Opens Fri. Call for show times and ticket prices, also at the Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri.-Thurs., March 14, 2, 4, 6, 8 & 10 p.m. $7-$10.*

Made for a Purpose: Gospel Patrons Film Night. Four shorts screen at this event, which is followed by a mixer. *Yost Theater; gospelpatrons.org. Fri., 6:30 p.m. Free.*

Senior Thesis Cycle 2 Film Screenings. These student-made films premiere, though not in this order: *Bloom, Bye Mommy, Open Strong, See You Next Summer, The Timeline*; and *Tom Foolery*. Titles are subject to change, and the films are also live streamed. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Fri., 7 p.m. Free.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show Live shadowcast troupe K.A.O.S. performs in Santa Ana, while it's Midnight Insanity in Long Beach. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 11:30 p.m. $7-$10; also at Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org; Sat., 11:55 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

The Girls Fery Malek-Madani equipped schoolgirls in Iran with video cameras to capture their dreams. *UC Irvine, www.iawfoundation.org/main-registration-page/?ee=45. Sat., 1 p.m. $30.*

The Innocents A 19th-century British governess (Deborah Kerr) takes care of a wealthy household's children (Pamela Franklin and Martin Stephens)—and comes to believe their mansion and the grounds are haunted. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat., 4 p.m. $10.*

Graduate Thesis Cycle 0, 1 & 2 Film Screenings. These graduate-student created films premiere, though not in this order: *Popcorn, Premenstrual Margot, Rust*, and *Sisters*. Titles are subject to change, and the films are also live streamed. *Chapman University; chapman.edu/dodge/ Sat., 7 p.m. Free.*

An Evening With Greg Sestero + *Best Friends Volume 2* A drifter (Sestero) and mortician (Tommy Wiseau), who together hatched a doomed enterprise in *Volume 1*, go their separate ways. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat., 7:30 p.m. $15.*

***L'année dernière à Marienbad* (*Last Year at Marienbad*)** A man (Giorgio Albertazzi) in an isolated chateau insists that he had an affair the year before with a woman (Delphine Seyrig), who insists they just met. *Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Sun., 11 a.m. $9-$12.*

Bolshoi Ballet: *The Sleeping Beauty* The classic tale of Princess Aurora, who falls under the curse of the Evil Fairy Carabosse and into a deep slumber lasting 100 years—unless a kiss from a prince breaks the spell. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 12:55 p.m. $16-$18; also at Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Sun. & Tues. Call theater for show times and ticket prices.*

Marie Antoinette The young Austrian princess (Kirsten Dunst) ascends to become the wife of King Louis XVI (Jason Schwartzman). *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Mon.-Tues., 2:30, 5 & 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.*

Hillbilly: Exploring America's Great Divide A personal and political journey into the heart of the Appalachian coalfields, exploring the role of media representation in the creation of the iconic American "hillbilly," as well as the impact of these stereotypes on our current cultural and political divide. *Chapman University; www.muscocenter.org. Tues., 7:30 p.m. Free, but RSVP to reserve a seat.*

***Dokhtari dar šab tanhâ be xâne miravad* (*A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*)** Ana Lily Amirpour's 2014 film is billed as "the first Iranian vampire western." *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Wed., 2:30, 5, 7:30 & 10 p.m., Thurs., March 14, 2:30, 5 & 10 p.m. $7-$10.*

Doctor Who: Logopolis Tom Baker's Doctor forms a temporary truce with his arch-enemy the Master (Anthony Ainley) to stop the unravelling of the universe that the Master accidentally started. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Wed., 7 p.m. $12.50.*

The Terminator A cyborg (Arnold Schwarzenegger) is sent from the future to kill a young woman named Sarah Connor (Linda Hamilton). But a protector (Michael Biehn) also arrives from the future because Sarah's life is to have great significance in the years ahead. *Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

Galaxy Quest The fictional *Galaxy Quest* crew is beamed aboard a real spaceship by aliens who took the onscreen exploits literally. *Fullerton Public Library, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., March 14, 1 p.m. Free.*

Patterns of Evidence: The Moses Controversy Timothy Mahoney seeks scientific evidence that Moses actually wrote the first books of the bible. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., March 14, 6:30 p.m. $10.50-$12.50.*

Fate/stay night [Heaven's Feel] THE MOVIE II. lost butterfly It's the latest installment of the beloved series from the creators of the wildly popular Fate franchise. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., March 7, 7 p.m. $10.50-$12.50.*

Freedom Writers: Stories From the Heart Erin Gruwell inspired at-risk students to become more tolerant and to pursue education beyond graduation. *UCI Student Center, (949) 824-6117. Thurs., March 14, 7 p.m. Free.*

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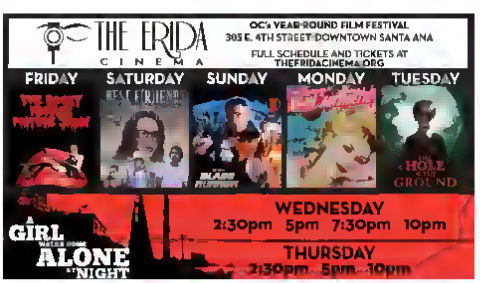

Halcyon Daze

STAGEStheatre's *Maple & Vine* transports you to an *Ozzie and Harriet*-style *Westworld*

BY JOEL BEERS

COURTESY OF STAGES THEATRE

Friends of Bill W know it as "pulling a geographic"—picking up stakes and moving away from the people for the promise of a fresh start and a clean slate. The problem is that wherever you go, there you are. And the hardest monkey to shake off your back, at least for those of us who are interesting, is the one chattering in your head.

But that doesn't deter the Manhattan power couple at the heart of Jordan Harrison's 2011 dark comedy *Maple & Vine* from chucking the urban grind and unplugging from 24-7 digital convenience in order to slip into new skins. They are characters in 1955 Middle America, playing in real time in a *Westworld*-ish gated community somewhere in the Midwest, where cellphones are verboten, men work in offices and factories, women run the home, and words such as *sushi* and *portobello* might as well be ethnic slurs directed at whatever Japs or dagos are being whispered about.

It's an intriguing premise. Would you sacrifice the instant gratification and digital ease of Wikipedia, Amazon and DoorDash for the public library, merchants who actually know your name, and spending seven hours making chicken stock from scratch? Hell no, you wouldn't (and if you leaned yes, you're full of shit—or blessed with either a savings account that allows you the indulgence of lots of free time or a lifestyle in which doing more with less isn't as much a choice as it is a necessity).

But Katha and Ryu—burned out in the Big City, reeling from the profound disappointment of miscarriage, and unfulfilled by careers in publishing and plastic surgery—jump at, or at least tilt toward, the opportunity to trade the color pixels and 4G of modern life for the black-and-white world of *Ozzie and Harriet*. Sure, they have safe words (Hillary Rodham Clinton) in case either feels compelled to crack the manufactured nostalgia they've adopted, but they know what life in the now is like, or not like, so why not embrace the allure of a more authentic past when the present feels so immediate and always there that it seems completely fake?

Of course, back then isn't quite what anyone thinks. Instead of a milieu in which no one is allowed to mind their goddamn business—or not post their private shit for a world of strangers to gawk at—they find themselves in one in which whispers reign, repression is noble, and no one is allowed to mind their own goddamn business because, really, there's nothing to do except fixate on other people's business.

Harrison's story, and Katha and Ryu's attempts at reinventing themselves, is ably told in director Sarah Ripper's staging of the play. Neither Darri Kristin nor Lee Samuel Tanng telegraph Katha's and Ryu's journey, making this an ultimately satisfying ride for the audience. Equally dynamic are the characters of Dean (the smooth-talking ambassador for the Society of Dynamic Obsolescence, the shadowy outfit that runs this Midwest internment camp for the modern disaffected, played in seamlessly unctuous and ambiguous fashion by Jason Cook) and Roger (a simmering, always-on-the-edge-of-boiling Cristian Rincon), who shares the secret even Dean can't escape. Only Laura Lejuwaan's Ellen (Dean's long-suffering wife—and the most thinly written character) feels less than resonant, as if mother's little helper is working just a little too well.

The pace could be picked up, having so many short scenes means lots of blackouts that, when not fluid, makes it feel as if the production is continually pressing reset. But that's the type of thing that will surely be helped by repetition.

What can't be helped is that Harrison's play wraps up too tidily. The winners clearly win, and the losers equally clearly lose, but what about the people who matter most—the audience? Tossed the gauntlet of entertaining a choice between an authentic past that can't help but feel suffocating or a digital present that feels equally suffocating, it's never clear which is truly the most stifling.

Then again, maybe that's the point. Wherever you go, there you are. Wherever we choose to toss our hats or hang them, we're never too far from the only home we can't escape: the one inside us. And maybe it's less important to wish away the one we're in or to pine for a different one, than to make the one we've got work.

Maple & Vine's power couple do just that, albeit by entering a fantasy realm they don't seem eager to depart any time soon. But I reckon that's one reason why these dumb things called plays exist: to beckon us down an imaginary path in hopes of reminding us that the real one we're traversing leads anywhere we choose. And maybe having no direction home is exactly where we're supposed to be—because we're already there.

MAPLE & VINE

at STAGEStheatre, 400 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 525-4484, stagesoc.org. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m., Sun., 2 p.m. Through March 31. $22-$24.

ARTS OVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

March 8-14

THE GREAT GOD PAN. In Amy Herzog's play, two childhood acquaintances reunite by chance and uncover a startling secret that offsets their worlds. Fri.-Sat., 7:30 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.; Thurs., March 14, 7:30 p.m. Through March 17. $14-$16. Golden West College Mainstage Theater, 15751 Gothard St., Huntington Beach, (714) 895-8150; www.gwctheater.com.

NATURALIST-LED BIRD AND BUTTERFLY NATURE WALK. Volunteer Mike Clayton points out the various birds and butterflies that inhabit the Bell Canyon area of Caspers Wilderness Park. Sat., 9 a.m. Free. Caspers Wilderness Park, 33401 Ortega Hwy., San Juan Capistrano. (949) 923-2210; www.ocparks.com/caspers.

NUKU WOMEN'S MARKET. More than 20 female-run businesses will participate in a celebration of local creativity in honor of International Women's Day. Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Nuku, 425 30th St., Newport Beach. nukuswim.com.

"PROTECTING MOTHER EARTH." Rowan Harrison curates a group exhibition centered on environmental themes from the perspectives of Native Americans. Opening reception, Sat., noon. $10; members, free. Gallery open Tues.-Sun., noon-4 p.m. Through April 28. Free. Mackenthaler Cultural Center, 1201 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton, (714) 738-6595. themack.org.

"THE GIRLS". This opening reception for an exhibit of photographs taken by young Iranian girls who were prompted to document their lives and depict their dreams for the future includes a screening of the companion documentary of the same title followed by a Q&A with filmmaker Fery Malak-Madani. Sat., 1-5 p.m. $30. UC Irvine Jordan Center, 1100 Himanuea Gateway, Irvine. www.iawfoundation.org.

"PARADISO'S FALL". David Van Gough paints ethereal images of mythological beings that foreshadow the end of the world. Sat., 7-10 p.m. Free. Dark Art Emporium, 256 Elm Ave., Long Beach. (562) 612-1118; www.darkartemporium.com.

"JENNIFER LEVONIAN: LOST ISLANDS OF PHILADELPHIA". The artist creates a single-channel video depicting the story of two islands that were removed for trade vessels, as seen through the eyes of a girl searching for them. Open Tues.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Through May 18. Free. Grand Central Art Center, 125 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, (714) 566-7233; www.grandcentralartcenter.com.

"THE ART OF COMPETITION". Artists examine the various aspects of professional sports, from the stadiums to the team branding to the players. Open Thurs.-Fri., noon-4 p.m., Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Through May 12. Free. Orange County Great Park Gallery-8000 Great Park Blvd., Irvine, (949) 724-6880; ocgp.org/arts.

BARKER BASH

JOHN GILHOOLEY

MusInk's Brand-New Buzz

The loudest tattoo fest in OC revamps with bold new artists alongside Limp Bizkit

BY JOSH CHESLER

Since Ink-N-Iron left the *Queen Mary* in 2015, the only tattoo conventions worth attending in Southern California are the Golden State Tattoo Expo in Pasadena and MusInk at the OC Fair & Event Center in Costa Mesa. Sure, there are others in Pomona and Long Beach, but those are a pretty significant step down in both quality and recognition.

While Golden State is a more traditional convention that carries a strong focus on the art of tattooing (and related products), MusInk has always been a weekend-long party celebrating tattoos, music, custom cars and the culture that goes with all of them.

So, if you're looking at the lineup for this year's MusInk and thinking it looks a bit odd, you're not alone. Joining headliners Suicidal Tendencies, Limp Bizkit and the Vandals are supporting acts such as Fear, TSOL, Sick of It All and Dead Kennedys. Though the biggest draws of this year's massive event have more than a few people wondering what decade they woke up in, the festival's perennial host, Travis Barker, is quick to point out there's quite a bit of rising talent to balance out some of the older acts.

"This year's a little different in the aspect that we have Limp Bizkit and a few new and exciting bands that are just crazy," Barker says. "There are a lot of first-timers who have never been at MusInk, and that's exciting to me. We kind of went old-school on Friday—we've actually put in offers for Suicidal [Tendencies] every year, but it never worked out. But then on the Limp Bizkit day, it's very new-school with bands like Ho99o9 and City Morgue."

And on MusInk would be complete without a performance by the famous drummer himself. In previous years, Barker has hit the stage with everyone from blink-182 (in their first major show with Matt Skiba) to Yelawolf to Transplants, and this time around, he's scheduled for a "Drum and DJ" set on Saturday night.

Of course, that's likely not the only time the 43-year-old will be behind a drum kit this weekend. "I'll probably hop up and play, like, two songs with Suicidal [Tendencies] on Friday, and then do something with a DJ on Saturday, and then possibly something on Sunday," Barker says. "I just like doing guest stuff with whoever wants me to join them."

Sunday's lineup consists of not only powerhouse punkers the Vandals, but also Fear, Dead Kennedys, TSOL, Anti-Flag and Voodoo Glow Skulls. It's about as solid of a classic punk-rock lineup as you'll see anywhere. "I'm just amazed by the lineup, and when I look at it, I go, 'Why are we on top here? Why are we playing last?'" says Vandals bassist Joe Escalante with a laugh. "We don't care about when we play or who we play before or after, but we're just honored and grateful that whoever the powers are that decided this lineup thought we could close the show. We'll do our best.

"We went through many years of phoning in our shows, and I used to joke that one out of every 14 Vandals shows was amazing—but you might go to one of the other 13," Escalante continues. "Now, we actually practice weekly, even when we don't have a show lined up, just because we're such good friends and like to get together. We have good management and a good agent, so now there's a tour manager scheduling the practices and all that stuff—and just babying us—so we have a lot more fun together."

Outside of their hometown shows, the punk-rock veterans usually only play the occasional festival gig. "There are [music] festivals all over the world now, and I don't know how anyone else feels about them, but we love them," Escalante says. "We're still alive, but we're too old to get in a van and play a bunch of small shows or do a tour like people want us to. At festivals, we get to play in front of a lot of people all at once, and that's really the only way people are going to see us anymore. We've got a hunch lined up for the whole spring and summer, and it's great to play one here in our own back yard."

Aside from the music, MusInk will also feature hundreds of tattoo artists from all over the world, as well as a who's-who of local shops. But the most noteworthy evolution at MusInk has been the Low 'N' Slow Car Show that Barker curates. Over the past few years, it's gone from a small collection of classic rides serving as some eye candy to an entire display of not only cars, but also trucks and now vintage BMX bikes.

"I know other festivals have little displays that have Instagram moments, and I really feel like ours is the cars," Barker says. "We have some real showstoppers out there. They're the best that you could possibly come across, and I feel like that car culture goes hand-in-hand with the tattoos and music."

MUSINK

featuring Suicidal Tendencies, Limp Bizkit, the Vandals and more, at the OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500; musinkfest.com. Fri., 3–10 p.m., Sat., noon–10 p.m., Sun., noon–9 p.m. $29.50–$199. All ages.

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Dan's Dirty Dishes

How does this OC hardcore legend pay the bills?

Dan O'Mahony wears many hats. As a singer, songwriter, author, journalist, world traveler and activist, he has a resumé plenty of musicians would die for. The vocalist for such venerated OC hardcore bands as No for An Answer, Carry Nation and 411, as well as his current band, Shiner's Club, sings about rejecting homophobia, domestic abuse, war and self-destruction. Though I figured he was living off foundation grants, record-label money or residuals, I've never asked him what he does for a living when he's not on the road. That changed when we had a chance to speak recently

OC WEEKLY: *Okay, who are you, and why do you do what you do?*

DAN O'MAHONY I'm not sure exactly how to answer the question as to why, but my name is Dan O'Mahony. I've been singing in hardcore punk-rock bands from California for 36 years. I know that when I'm not doing it, I'm unhappy about not doing it, and when I am doing it, I'm slightly more sane than when I'm not. I think most musicians [would] say they do it to get their demons out, or they do it because of some political agenda, but I think, at the end of the day, an artist is an artist. If you've got music in you, you're probably not gonna function at full capacity unless you get the music out of you.

Does music pay your bills? If not, what does?

Being in a band costs me more than it makes me, just by virtue of recording. We borderline give our merch away because we get a kick out of it. There's no return on it. Even when I was moving the most units I ever did, which was never a particularly considerable sum, I rarely played with guarantees, so this has never been a bill-payer for me. I make more money right now than I've ever made, and I'm still well south of six figures. [Music] is something that I've been doing for 20 years. I have some passion for it, but it's not any kind of driving force in my life.

I manage restaurants. Specifically, I manage bars. Now, I work for a nationally recognized imprint that's the largest chain of its kind in the world, but for that reason, I mean, I go in, every day, realizing that nothing about me is reflected in anything on the walls there or in anything going on at my job. And it's all well and good to be a restaurateur, or a chicken slinger, or a beer merchant on a $4 million- or $5 million-per-year level, which is what my store does, but there's no me there.

Could you ever see yourself not playing music?

People talk about whether or not you age out on this music. Everybody expects blues guys and jazz guys to get old. I saw Ella Fitzgerald play live at the Hollywood Bowl a couple of years before she passed away. I'm sorry, but that was cooler than seeing Ella Fitzgerald in 1958. I think there is a certain beauty, a certain magic, to the aging punk rocker, though. I mean, to me, they're lions—males, females or anyone. I think if there are two things that punk rock—and underground music in general—would be well served by, [one] would be letting go of any notion that it's mandated that it be a youth culture because some aspects of it are really only best understood by the first-generation members of it. The other thing is that only the past is valid. Some of the baddest-ass music comes from the most traveled musicians, and some of the other baddest-ass music comes from babes in the woods, [musicians] who just started doing this. These notions that [underground music] is only for the young or only valid if it's old are mutually horseshit.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

ClockedIn

» BRAD LOGAN

COURTESY OF MEDWOLF

Friday

ARMORS, UFO UFO FEVER JOY: 8:30 p.m., $18 all ages. The Observatory 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

THE RELLRAYS: 8 p.m. $10, 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana. (657) 231-6005.

MUSINK, FEATURING SUICIDAL TENDENCIES: 3 p.m., $29.50-$199, all ages. OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa. (714) 708-1500. www.musinkfest.com.

THE NDISE PRESENTS CRADLE DF FILTH, CRYPTDRIANA: 6 p.m. $32, all ages. Hense at Blnes at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.honseatblues.com/anaheim.

THE REAL MCKENZIES, PIÑATA PROTEST: 8 p.m. $15, 21+. Alexs Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-9292; www.alexsbar.com.

THEM EVILS, FRANKIE + THE STUDS, BIG MONSTA: 8 p.m. $10-$12, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarercm.com.

WAR RECORDS PRESENTS RTRIFE, ACXDC, CODL SIDE, ORK RLU, EXTRICATE: 6:30 p.m., $12, all ages. Gardee Amp (The Locker Room), 12762 Main St., Garden Grove. (949) 415-8544. gardenamp.com.

Saturday

THE BASH DOGS, RLANCO NIND, PASTE, BAND OF GRINGOS: 8 p.m., $12, 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana. (657) 231-6005.

CARLOS MEDINA, THE GDSPEL SWAMP, CHAPIS, MYXEDEMA: 8 p.m., $8, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarercm.com.

METRIC, ZDÉ JULY TALK: 6:30 p.m., $56, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.honseatblues.com/anaheim.

MUSINK, FEATURING LIMP RIZKIT: 3 p.m., $29.50-$199, all ages. OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa. (714) 708-1500. www.musinkfest.com.

PENNIBACK X BIKERGANG PRESENT DRENCH FRIES, THE GEMS, MAKEOUT REEF, RELLA PORTER: 7 p.m., $8, all ages. Gardee Amp (The Locker Room), 12762 Main St., Gardee Grove. (949) 415-8544, gardenamp.com.

YACHTLEY CREW, KM TO THE AM: 8 p.m., $12-$15, 21+. Alexs Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-9292; www.alexsbar.com.

Z-TRIP, MELO-D, WET HAND DAN: 8 p.m., $20, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

Sunday

MUSINK, FEATURING THE VANDALS: none, $29.50-$199, all ages. OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa. (714) 708-1500; www.musinkfest.com.

Monday

CHDKER: 9 p.m., $15, all ages. The Coestellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

MDDN GRASS MDUNTAIN, FREE WEED, JAMES V: 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

Tuesday

GORDON LIGHTFDOT—80 YEARS STRONG TOUR: 8 p.m., $37.50-$100, all ages. City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 712-2700, www.citynationalgroveofanaheim.com.

LOW: 9 p.m., $20, 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana. (657) 231-6005.

Wednesday

THE RRIEFS, THE STITCHES, GENERATION SUICIDA, THE FLYTRAPS: 8 p.m., $15, 21+. Alexs Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-9292; www.alexsbar.com.

MADE IN TYO; THUTMOSE, 12 HONCHO: 8 p.m., $20-$60, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

Thursday, March 14

BARONESS, DEAFHEAVEN: 6:30 p.m., $29.50, all ages. Hense at Blnes at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.honseatblues.com/anaheim.

FEEBLE, PILEUP, TABLES TURNED, CROWN SHYNESS: 8 p.m., $5, 21+. Alexs Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-9292; www.alexsbar.com.

SHAED, MDRY RICH: 5 p.m., $12, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

TERMINAL A, RINSE & REPEAT, SHADOWHOUSE, PATCHDULI DEATH: 8 p.m., $7, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarercm.com.

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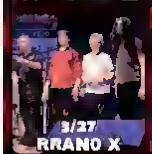

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4/E	MUSIC OF HEART & FLEETWOOD MAC W/ OOG N RUTTERFLY & MIRAGE
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4/9	RUOOY GUY
4/12	COMMON SENSE
4/13	MAOOOGS ANO TNE ENGLISNMAN (JOE COCKER TRIBUTE)
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4/19	AN EVEMIMO WITN TNE MUSICAL ROX
4/20	LOS LOROS
4/2E	REVERENO NORTON NEAT
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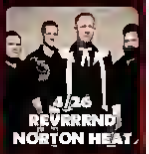
5/3	VENICE
5/4	RERLIN
5/5	ARETHR: QUEEN OF SOUL FT: CNARITY LOCKNART
S/9	ROGER CLYNE & TNE PEACEMAKERE
5/10	RAUL MALO
5/11	SONGS & STORIES: AN EVENING WITH ART ALEXAKIS of EVERCLEAR, CHRIS COLLINGWOOD OF FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE, MAX COLLINS OF EVE 6, JOHN WOZNIAK OF MARCY PLAYGROUND
5/12	PROJECT PRESLEY (ELVIS PRESLEY TRIBUTE)



UPCOMING SHOWS

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5/17	AN EVENING WITN COWROY JUNKIES	6/1E	REE GEES OOLO
6/1E	TNE 5TN OIMENSION	6/22	YNT
S/22	WILLIE K	6/23	AN EVENING WITN JONN NIATT
5/23	PUDDLES PITY PARTY	6/2E	CREEO RRATTON
5/24	OINGO ROINGO FORMER MEMRERS	7/13	LOS LONELY ROYS
S/2S	MUSIC LEGEND OICK DALE	E/12	ADRIAN RELEW
5/26	RLINO MELON	E/20	NERMAN'S NERMITS
S/30	LITTLE RIVER RANO	9/21	NERMAN'S NERMITS
5/31	YOUNG OURLINERS	9/22	GARY PUCKETT
E/1	OESPERAOO	E/27	QUEEN NATION
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Loaded Question

Let's say my kink is edging, and I edge myself for a few days leading up to a date. Is it my responsibility to tell my potential partner? There are a few variables here that are important to note. This is a first/Tinder date, and it's just a coffee date. BUT she said I have talked about our expectations, and there will likely be a physical aspect in whatever potential relationship may ensue. I understand that it's never cool to involve someone in your kink without their consent, but what are the rules here? On one hand, if I don't divulge this information, I could see how my production of an unexpectedly large amount of ejaculate could be upsetting, depending on the circumstances/activity. But on the other hand, at least some amount of come is expected, right? If I randomly had massive loads every time through no effort of my own, would I be responsible for letting a partner know? Perhaps it would be the polite thing to do. I guess I'd feel comfortable saying, "Hey, by the way, I produce very large loads," if sex were imminent. But when you add the kink factor into the mix, I think something like that should be talked about before sex is "imminent." So what responsibility do I have to divulge this information? And if I do have a responsibility to divulge this, when would be the appropriate time to bring it up? I feel like it could be sexy to be so open about a taboo given that we've already discussed the desire for a physical aspect to the relationship. But at what point between sex being "not off-limits" and "my parts are going to be instructing with your parts as soon as our clothes are off" is the right moment to disclose my kink?

What Ought One Do?

Let's say … you blow that load. I can't imagine your new friend will be shocked. Blowing loads, after all, is what men do* with their penises**. WOOO, and most people who are attracted to men are aware of this fact. And anyone who's slept with two or more men is aware that some men blow bigger loads than others. Volume varies. Volumes vary between men, and the volume of an individual man's loads can vary naturally or as the direct result of an intentional intervention such as edging.

Backing up for a second. Edging entails bringing yourself or being brought to the edge of coming over and over again. It's about getting yourself or someone else as close as you can to the "point of orgasmic inevitability" without going over. Draw out the buildup to a single orgasm for hours or days—by edging yourself or being edged by someone else—and the resulting load will be larger than normal for the edged individual. But even so, an edged dude's load can still be smaller than the load of a guy who just naturally produces more ejaculate.

And in answer to your question, WOOO, no. I don't think there's a pressing need to disclose your kink to your date. If it gets sexual, she's going to expect you to produce ejaculate at some point. And even if the load you wind up blowing is enormous, you're not going to drown her or wash out her IUD.

Frankly, WOOO, your letter reads as if you got baked out of your mind and sat up half the night trying to come up with an excuse to tell this woman about your not-that-kinky kink, and "I should tell her as a courtesy" was the best you could do.

If you want to tell her, go ahead and tell her. But since there's no *need* to tell her that you sometimes like to stroke for a bit without climaxing, there's a strong chance she'll react negatively to your "courtesy" disclosure. Even if she's made it clear there could be "a physical aspect in whatever potential relationship may ensue"—even if that's not just dickful thinking on your part—she's going to be scrutinizing you for signs that you aren't someone she wants to get naked with. She'll be looking for red flags at your first face-to-face meeting, and if you come across like a creep with piss-poor judgment—and a needless conversation about how much ejaculate you produce and why you produce so much ejaculate will definitely come across as creepy—then she may decide not to ensue with you.

I'm a queer man who usually tops with men. A bad first try at receiving anal at age 18 led me to not bottom for years. After seeing the looks of delight on my partners' faces, I decided to give bottoming another go. I followed your advice—lots of lube and relaxation, a little weed—and tried lots of different positions and dick sizes. But no matter what, I never seem to get past the pain and into the pleasure zone. I enjoy being fingered and using a prostate massager, so I know my prostate is in there. How many times should I try bottoming before I decide it's not for me?

Twentysomething Into Glutes Had To Have Orgasms Lustily Elsewhere

There's no set number of times a queer person has to try bottoming before deciding it's not for them, TIGHTHOLE. A person—queer or straight—can make that call without ever having tried bottoming. An exclusive top who isn't afraid of his own hole, i.e., a queer guy who enjoys being fingered and using a prostate massager, doesn't have a hang-up; he's just a guy who knows what works for his hole and what doesn't. And that's more than most people know.

A few days ago, someone broke into my house. Everything of value was taken—including my two dogs—but they left my clothes and stuff of that nature. Last night, my boyfriend and I were getting ready to fuck, and I went to the drawer I keep all our sex toys in, and they were all gone. I'm not only upset because hundreds of dollars of toys were taken, but I also feel violated. This person has violated me not only by coming into my home and taking things, but also by taking something so personal and intimate. I survived rape and molestation by a family member who is in jail for his actions, so sadly, I know what it feels like to be violated. And this has brought that violation back and makes me feel like that same vulnerable, helpless child I was so many years ago. My boyfriend is being supportive, but I just feel so horrible, and I do not know how to cope with this.

Thief Has Exhumed Fondly Trauma

I'm so sorry this was done to you. THEFT, and it's perfectly understandable that this final violation—the theft of your sex toys on top of the theft of your other belongings and your dogs (!!!)—would dredge up painful memories of past sexual violations. I can't offer you much beyond my acknowledgment of how awful this is and my sympathy. But if you're having trouble coping, if you're reeling from this, schedule a few sessions with a good therapist, someone who can help you process those feelings. I also think you should consider moving to a place that won't be haunted by this violation, if possible, and your boyfriend should—when you're ready—take you out and treat you to a few brand-new sex toys.

* Not all men have penises, not all penises have men, not all men blow loads, not all loads are blown by men, etc.

** Not the only thing men do with their penises, some men don't do that thing with their penises, some penis-havers don't do that thing as men, etc.

On the Lovecast *(savagelovecast.com), we got punked! Contact Dan via mail@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org*

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UPCOMING SEX EDUCATION EVENTS

BUTT BASICS: PLEASURABLE ANAL PLAY FOR MEN & WOMEN
THURS. MARCH 14TH @ 7:15PM

In this workshop we will focus on anal play for both men & women. Anal play can be extremely pleasurable when done right, but most couples who try anal in the bedroom do not know the necessary tips and techniques to make it feel good, and therefore experience pain instead of pleasure. We will cover anal sex as well as anal toys and prostate play.

Tickets are $15 per person or $25 per couple when prepaid by 3/13/19. If space is available, tickets will be $25 per person on the day of the workshop.

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TOKE OF THE WEEK

» JEFFERSON VANBILLIARD

Kikoko Sensuali-Tea

Leading the way in cannabis wellness isn't just a slogan for Kikoko. The company's teas are precisely dosed and contain only organically grown, pesticide-free ingredients. Of all the products Kikoko offers, our favorite is the Sensuali-Tea, with hibiscus, cardamom and rose petals. The delicious combination of lavender, licorice root and orange peel is well-balanced, while the low amount of THC helps your brain send signals to your bathing-suit area that it's go time.

The science behind sexual arousal and cannabis is quite complex and continues to be researched, but basically, it goes like this: The devil's lettuce makes time spent with that special someone, or alone, a lot better. After a few sips of Kikoko's magical elixir, you'll be ready for whatever your day or night has in store. So heat up that kettle and get those pants off—it's tea time!

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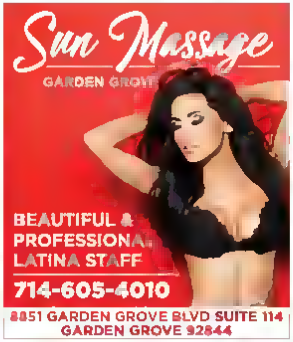
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Rough Seas

Navigating through Musical Theatre West's 67-year journey

BY STEVE OONOFRIO

Before becoming a nationally touring theater company, Musical Theatre West humbly began as the Whittier Civic Light Opera (CLO) in 1952. Around that time, Civic Light Operas were popping up all over Southern California, as well as the rest of the country, and the Whittier CLO was founded by a group of volunteers who shared an intense passion for theater. In the decade after Edwin Lester started the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera, similar companies were established in neighboring cities such as Santa Barbara, Long Beach and San Bernardino. In this context, it may seem as though the Whittier CLO was just another product of the era's theater craze, but it proved to be much more than that. Paul Garman, the current executive director of Musical Theatre West, attributes this to the dedication and perseverance of the company's earliest members. "They just dedicated their lives to it," he says. "People would have rehearsals in their homes or their garages, then they started seaming the costumes in their homes and garages. There was a lot of passion involved."

Garman, who is also the longest-running member of the company, started acting with the Whittier CLO as a child in 1963. Over the years, he's experienced most chapters of the group's history and seen many of its performers on even larger stages. The most notable would be Susan Egan, who performed with the group while she was in high school and later gained fame for originating the role of Belle in the Broadway adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Despite the widespread success they've achieved as Musical Theatre West, Garman remembers when times were tough. The company's first venue, Whittier High School's auditorium, often had a full event schedule, so the Whittier CLO could only stage one or two performances per year. The group would rehearse for six weeks for a one-weekend-only production. It was also rare for the company to break even, let alone make a profit from ticket sales. "We would do the shows, but we might not be able to finish paying the director or royalties to the company in New York," Garman recalls. "So we'd spend the rest of the year doing white elephant sales, mini shows and things like that to try to raise enough money to pay everybody. By then, it was time to start on the next one," he adds with a chuckle.

The group's luck began to change in 1977, when the city of La Mirada asked for advice on starting a new community-theater group in a vacant movie theater. Because the city of Whittier hadn't been very supportive of the Whittier CLO, the group decided to offer much more than advice and relocated. Thus, the second incarnation of the company was born. The Whittier-La Mirada Light Opera was now able to put on three shows a year, which Garman admits was a bit intimidating.

In the mid-'80s, the company finally started to make some profits. Garman, who by this time had gone from acting to becoming a member of the executive board to company president to production coordinator, could finally start making an income from his passion. "It was a big, big thing when they decided to pay me $50 a month to do that," he says with a laugh. "It literally took three board meetings to figure out if that was okay." Though Garman had to work a second and sometimes even a third job to make ends meet until the mid-'90s, his dedication to the group never wavered.

Unfortunately, the Whittier-La Mirada Light Opera's La Mirada glory days would come to an end as a city-sponsored group started putting on musical productions in the same theater. Once again, the company found itself in need of a permanent home.

Meanwhile, the Long Beach CLO had just gone bankrupt, leaving a ton of disgruntled subscribers who hadn't gotten the full season they had paid for. The Whittier-La Mirada Light Opera then offered all Long Beach CLO subscribers the chance to exchange their tickets for a subscription to the rest of their shows in La Mirada that year. "Fifteen thousand people did that," recalls Garman. "So we figured there was definitely an interest in musical theater down [in Long Beach]. We moved here between '97 and '98." The company changed its name again, hopefully for the last time, and became Musical Theatre West.

The company has seen more success than its original members could have imagined. Garman attributes much of this to the Long Beach arts community. In addition, Garman says, it's important for the various arts and theater groups in the city to cooperate with one another, instead of acting as competitors. Whenever he speaks onstage before a show, he urges the audience to check out the other groups in the area. "It's so that we're always trying to nourish and support one another," he explains.

These days, the company puts on an average of three large productions per year, often with some smaller ones sprinkled in between. And the group offers a variety in its schedule. For instance, its production of the classic musical *Oliver!* recently wrapped, and next, Musical Theatre West will present *Catch Me If You Can*, based on the 2002 movie of the same name. This diversity ensures the group is always doing something different and fresh, especially when compared to touring Broadway productions. "Many times, the tours that have been out for a year or two are not as energetic as a show that's just going to be produced for three weeks here in Long Beach," explains Garman.

It was a long and often tumultuous road, but Musical Theatre West serves as an example of what can be achieved through plenty of determination, especially when things seem most disheartening. "I've pretty much seen it grow from a community-theater type of organization to a professional regional-theater group," Garman says. Hopefully, the next 67 years will be smooth sailing.

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